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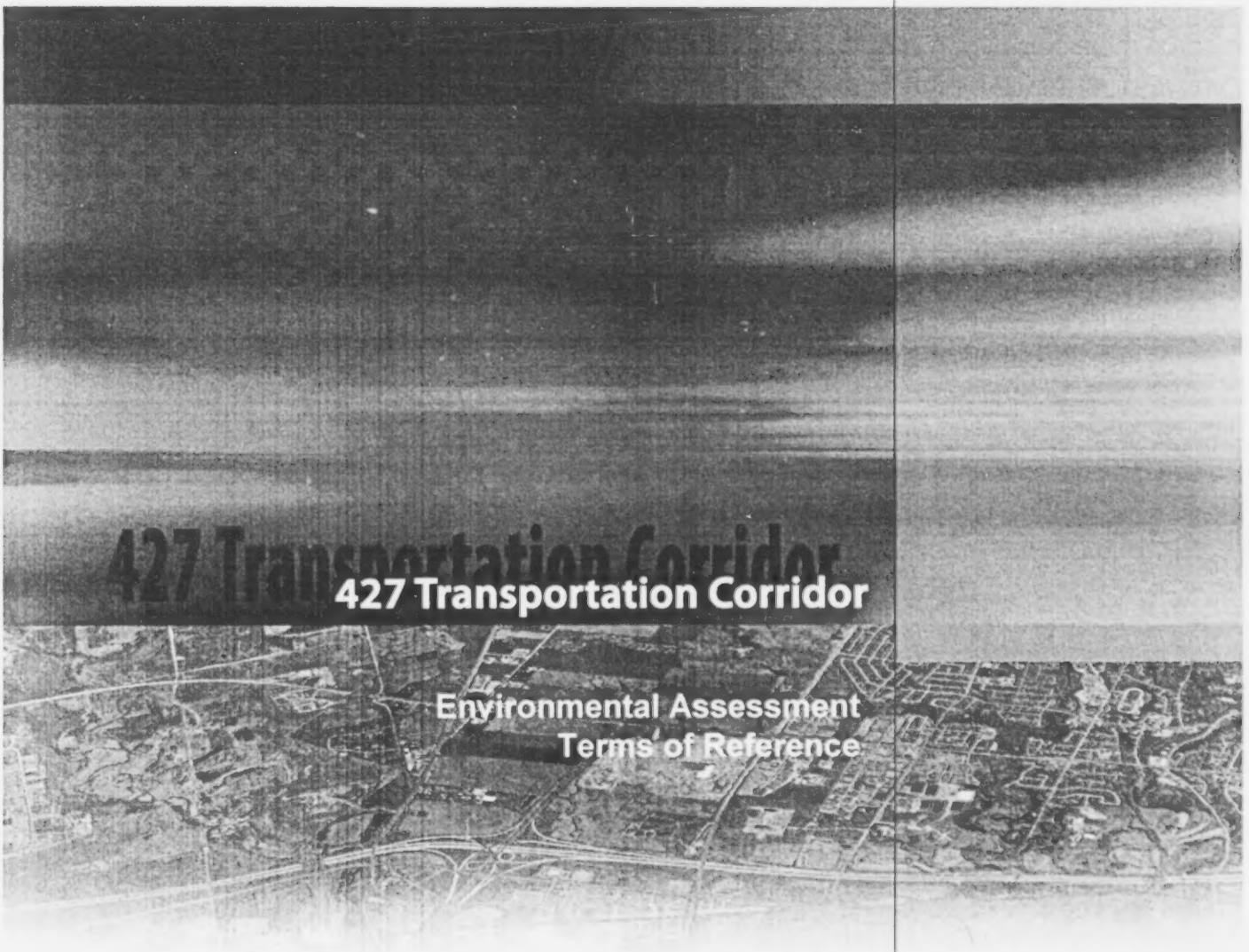

427 Transportation Corridor

Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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April 2005

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427 Transportation Corridor

Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

April 2005

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1. Introduction

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is working to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods within the context of the province's *Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Draft Growth Plan)* as released in February 2005.

As one element of the transportation objectives of the *Draft Growth Plan*, MTO has commenced the formal Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the *427 Transportation Corridor* within the Western part of Vaughan and the eastern part of the City of Brampton.The EA process will confirm the transportation problems and opportunities, and develop and evaluate potential solutions. The first stage in the formal EA process is the preparation of an EA Terms of Reference document. This document, the "*427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference*" outlines the framework for completing this EA study. This EA ToR document is being submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) under Section 6 (2)(a) of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (OEAA). Under this process, the subsequent EA will consider every phase of the planning process including need, alternatives to the undertaking (fundamentally different ways of addressing the problem), alternative methods (route alternatives), and recommendations for specific infrastructure, as required, including the associated impacts and mitigation measures.

It should be noted that the Terms of Reference identifies a base level of effort, to be added to, what the proponent will do during the preparation of the subsequent EA. Enhancements to the process and work tasks will be considered by the MTO, as required over the course of the EA study, based on consultation input, any changes to Provincial Policy and the availability of new information. MTO will undertake that EA based on the legislative requirements, policies, procedures and protocols that are in place at the time that the work is done.

Following approval of the Terms of Reference by the Minister of the Environment, MTO may proceed with the EA Study in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference.

Exhibit 1.1 – Project Key Map highlights the area in which preliminary transportation problems and opportunities have been identified.

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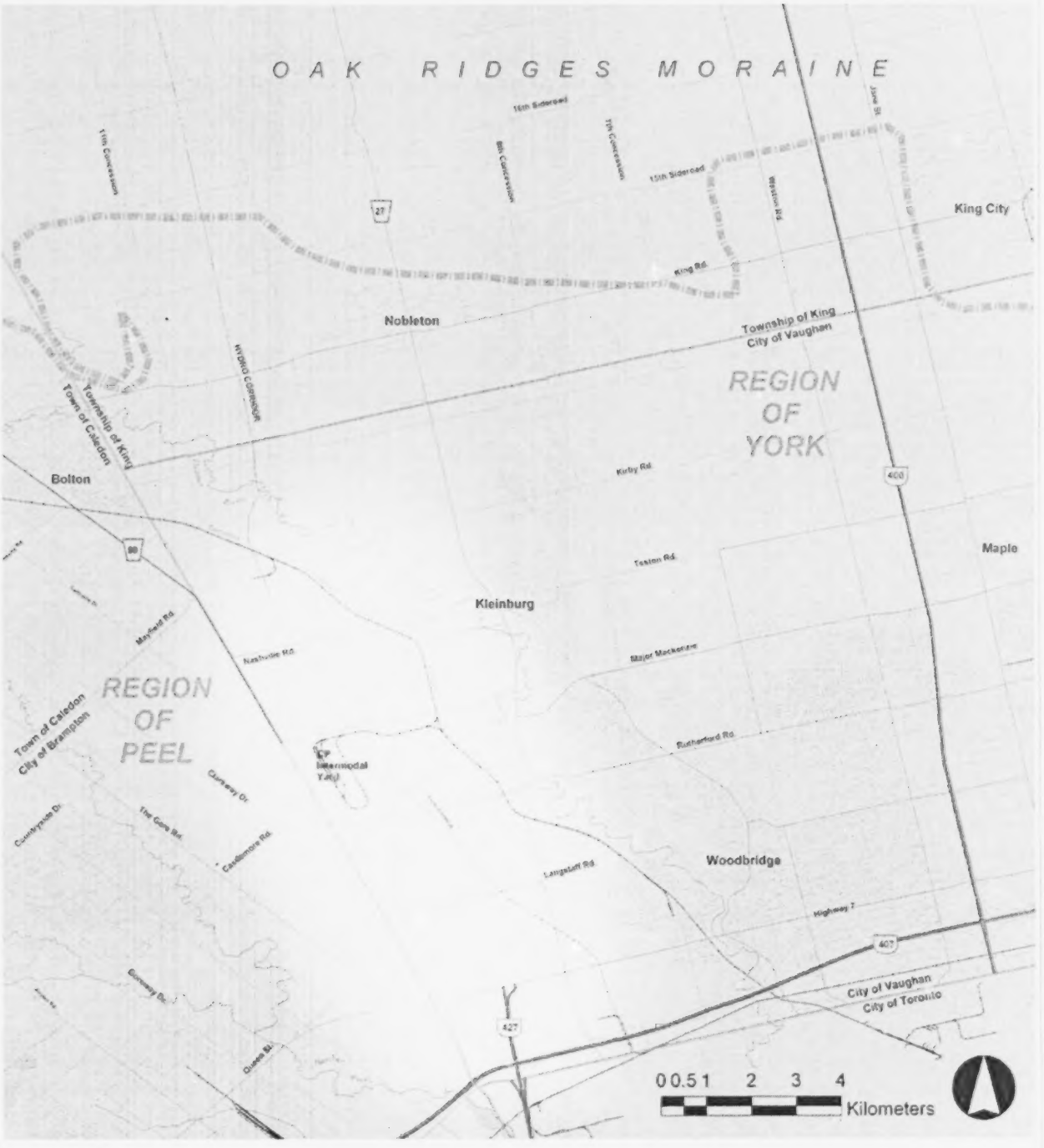
427 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference

Key Plan

EXHIBIT 1.1



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427 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference

Key Plan

EXHIBIT
1.1

1.1. Background

In June 2002, the Ministry of Transportation commenced the Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the GTA North Transportation Corridor between the existing terminus of Highway 427 in Vaughan and Simcoe County.

In February 2005, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Renewal released a *Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. The *Draft Growth Plan* outlines a set of policies for managing growth and development and guiding planning decisions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe over the next 30 years. This broad based plan represents a planning "vision" for the Province of Ontario. As a part of this vision, the plan outlines a strategy for "Where and How to Grow", "Infrastructure to Support Growth", "Protecting What is Valuable", "Sub-Area Growth Strategies" and "Implementation". Once enabled by the Places to Grow Act, the Growth Plan requires that planning decisions made by the Province, municipalities and other authorities conform to the policies contained in the Growth Plan.

As part of the policies in the *Draft Growth Plan*, the *GTA North Transportation Corridor* across and north of the Oak Ridges Moraine is not identified as an initiative as the *Draft Growth Plan* places emphasis on servicing that area by optimizing Highway 400, intensification of existing urban areas and transit-supportive communities, and higher order transit. As such, the GTA North Corridor Study is no longer active.

The *Draft Growth Plan* clearly supports the need to consider solutions to the existing and short-term needs (transportation deficiencies) associated with the existing terminus of Highway 427, to improve access to the inter-modal facility to enhance goods movement and provide access to a major employment growth area. Consistent with the Draft Growth Plan, MTO has initiated the formal Environmental Assessment process for the 427 Transportation Corridor, commencing with this Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference.

The 427 Transportation Corridor study is not intended to be a phased step towards a longer-term transportation corridor. This undertaking has a specific purpose to address a distinct set of immediate / short-term transportation problems. One of the objectives of the EA study will be to not preclude or predetermine the location of a future extension if it is ever required.

1.2. Planning and Environmental Assessment Process

The planning for all major infrastructure projects in the province of Ontario is conducted in a similar manner. MTO undertakes the following process in planning complex transportation projects:

- Preliminary identification of existing and future transportation problems/deficiencies;
- Initiate formal EA process including the development of the EA Terms of Reference (where required); and
- Undertake Environmental Assessment.

One of the features of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (OEAA), January 1, 1997, is the requirement for the preparation, submission and approval of a Terms of Reference before work begins on an Environmental Assessment (EA). As part of the formal submission and approval process, the Terms of Reference is submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for public and government agency comment and review. Once approved by the Minister of the Environment, the Terms of Reference sets out a framework that will guide the preparation of the EA. The approval of the Terms of Reference is the first statutory decision made by the Minister of the Environment in the EA planning and approval process.

As per the OEAA, the Environmental Assessment study will be consistent with the requirements set out in Section 6.1 (2) of the Environmental Assessment Act. The EA will address the following components:

- A description of the purpose of the undertaking;
- A description of and statement of the rationale for the proposed undertaking, alternatives to the undertaking, and alternative methods for carrying out the undertaking;
- A description of:
  - The environment that will be affected or might reasonably be anticipated to be affected, directly or indirectly, by the undertaking, the alternatives to the undertaking, and the alternative methods of carrying out the undertaking;
  - The effects that will be caused or that might reasonably be expected to be caused to the environment, by the undertaking, the alternatives to the undertaking, and the alternative methods of carrying out the undertaking;
  - The actions necessary or that might reasonably be expected to be necessary to prevent, change, mitigate or remedy the effects upon or the effects that might reasonably be expected upon the environment, by the undertaking, the alternatives to the undertaking, and the alternative methods of carrying out the undertaking;
- An evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages to the environment of the undertaking, the alternatives to the undertaking, and the alternative methods of carrying out the undertaking; and
- A description of the consultation undertaken by the proponent and the results of the consultation.

The specific activities to be carried out as part of the EA are described in more detail in Chapters 2 – 7 of this document.

A Consultation Record that summarizes the consultation undertaken during the preparation of this EA ToR will be completed after consultation is complete.

Consultation that will be undertaken during the course of the EA is documented in Chapter 7.

1.3. Federal/Provincial Environmental Assessment Co-ordination

1.3.1. Need for Federal/Provincial EA Co-ordination

The proponent's undertaking is subject to the requirements of the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*. The requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) may also apply. The proponent intends to work in a coordinated way with provincial and federal governments. Both governments have formally agreed to co-ordinate their respective EA processes established by the applicable environmental assessment legislation.

1.3.2. Co-ordinated EA Process for MTO Projects

The federal/provincial co-ordination process chart outlined in **Document A** of the **Supporting Documentation**will guide the proponent. This proposed approach is designed to address the information requirements of both federal and provincial environmental assessment Acts.

1.3.3. Application of the Co-ordinated EA Process

It is recognized by both the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (on behalf of the federal authorities) and the proponent that ongoing dialogue on the information requirements should continue as the project progresses. As such, it may be necessary for the proponent to provide additional or more detailed information as the EA process proceeds. The intent is to produce a single body of documentation on environmental effects to meet all of the information needs of both the federal and provincial governments. To the extent practical, federal/provincial information requirements regarding potential factors to be assessed in the context of this study have been integrated. General information requirements under CEAA can be found in the **Supporting Documentation (Document A)** of this ToR.

1.4. Statement of Proponency

The **Ontario Ministry of Transportation** is the proponent for this Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference for the 427 Transportation Corridor.

1.5. Submission Statement

The preparation of an EA Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 427 Transportation Corridor, and subsequent submission to the Minister of the Environment for review and a decision regarding approval, is a requirement of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

This ToR has been prepared in accordance with Section 6 (2)(a) of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act and specifically addresses the following:

- Identification of the Proponent (Chapter 1 of this document);
- The purpose for the undertaking (Chapter 2);
- The process for selecting preferred alternatives to the undertaking (Chapter 4);
- The process for generating the study area (Chapter 5);
- The process for generating and selecting preferred alternative methods (Chapter 5);
- A commitment to carry out compliance monitoring (Chapter 6); and,
- A description of the Consultation Plan proposed for the Environmental Assessment (Chapter 7).

The additional documentation submitted with this ToR, for which approval is not being sought, includes a series of Supporting Documentsand a Record of Consultation During Preparation of the EA ToR (to be completed before submitting the Final ToR).

2. Purpose of the Undertaking

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is working to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods within the context of the province's *Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* as released in February 2005. This broad based plan represents a planning "vision" for the Province of Ontario. As a part of this vision, the plan sets out policies regarding "Where and How to Grow", "Infrastructure to Support Growth", "Protecting What is Valuable", "Sub-Area Growth Strategies" and "Implementation".

The Draft Growth Plan clearly supports the need to consider solutions to the significant transportation deficiencies at the existing terminus of Highway 427, to improve access to the inter-modal facility to enhance goods movement and provide access to a major employment growth area. As one element of the transportation objectives of the *Draft Growth Plan*, MTO has commenced the formal environmental assessment (EA) process for the 427 Transportation Corridor south of the Green Belt.

The purpose of the EA study is to:

- Address **existing and short term** transportation problems related to the current Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic accessibility to and from the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility, and their impact on inter-regional traffic on Highway 50 and York Regional Road 7;
- Identify and protect required property for any proposed transportation corridor and allow planned development to occur outside of the transportation corridor;
- Ensure that alternatives / preferred solution will not preclude or predetermine planning for the other future transportation corridors such as the GTA West corridor or a future extension of the transportation corridor northerly.

A preliminary identification of transportation problems and opportunities within the 427 Transportation Corridor area is included in this ToR document. Exhibit 1.1 shows the area in which general transportation problems and opportunities have been and will be considered.

2.1. Policy Framework and Other Government Initiatives

The following Provincial, Federal, Regional and local policy documents establish the policy framework within which transportation problems and opportunities and potential solutions will be identified as part of the EA:

- Draft Growth Plan, Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, February 2005;
- Greenbelt Plan, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, February 2005;
- Provincial Policy Statement, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, March 2005;

- Straight Ahead – A Vision for Transportation in Canada, Transport Canada, February 2003;
- Central Ontario Strategic Transportation Directions Study, MTO, (Draft) February 2002; and
- Official Plans of the Regional Municipality of York and Regional Municipality of Peel and any other regional municipal Official Plans as deemed appropriate during the EA.

In general, there are a number of consistent themes and principles embodied in the above documents and other relevant planning, transportation and policy documents that relate to the provision of transportation services within the Province and regionally. These themes and principles will be used to guide the assessment and selection of alternatives to the undertaking. These common themes and principles include:

- Manage economic growth and accommodate the future employment and population growth forecasted for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- Make effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure;
- Develop a network that results in the safe and efficient movement of people and goods;
- Improve access to inter-modal facilities as a priority for moving goods;
- Promote residential and employment intensification through transit supportive development;
- Develop a network that is consistent with municipal land use aspirations (as outlined in approved Official Plans);
- Develop an integrated transportation network that provides choice for users; and
- Develop a network, mobility strategies and technologies that foster a clean and healthy environment.

2.2. Overview and Outlook

Consideration of the Purpose of the Undertaking for a transportation project requires a clear understanding of the problems and opportunities that exist within the area of analysis and within the planning horizon timeframe. Given that this project is only intended to address **existing and short term** issues, the planning horizon is considered to be within the 10-15 year time period. This chapter outlines a number of preliminary findings related to transportation problems and opportunities. During the future EA, additional technical work will be undertaken to define and document transportation problems (the rationale and purpose of the undertaking and opportunities). That work will be based on the most recent planning policies, and forecast population, employment, economic and travel data.

2.3 Transportation Problems and Opportunities

The area under consideration includes the western part of the City of Vaughan and the eastern part of the City of Brampton. The existing transportation network is being impacted by several factors including population and employment growth, goods movement growth and local land use policies and development pressures.

Overview of Current and Future Conditions

Highway 427 currently terminates at York Regional Road 7 in the City of Vaughan contributing to a number of traffic issues on the adjacent road network including operational issues on Highway 27, Highway 50 and their intersections at York Regional Road 7. Existing Highway 427 south of Regional Road 7 carries upwards of 50,000 vehicles daily of which over 4,000 vehicles are classified as heavy trucks. An assessment of the origins of vehicles traveling on this section of Highway 427 in the morning peak hour indicates that approximately 20% of the vehicles are from north of Peel Region, approximately 25% are from Peel Region with the remaining 55% originating from York Region and areas north of York Region.

An inter-regional express transit service is currently provided along the Queen Street and Regional Road 7 corridor providing for 15 minute headways during the peak travel periods. Over the next 10 to 15 years, Brampton Transit and York Region Transit will provide high-level bus rapid transit service along the Regional Road 7 corridor approaching 5 minute service headways. This transit service will be complemented with proposed bus rapid transit service along the proposed Highway 407 Transitway. In addition, the York Region Transportation Master Plan assumes HOV lanes on the 400-series highways including Highway 427, Highway 407 and Highway 400 that serve the study area.

The current Highway 427 terminus restricts access to the planned industrial lands immediately north of Regional Road 7 and the residential lands west of Highway 50, which are emerging growth centres for population and employment growth in east Brampton and west Vaughan respectively. Various development applications in west Vaughan and east Brampton are being withheld due to uncertainty of the limits of a future north-south transportation corridor through this area.

Future development in the area north of the existing Highway 427 terminus, in west Vaughan, includes the following development areas:

- Highway 427 West Employment Area (Huntington Business Park)
    - Located south of Langstaff Road between Highway 50 and Highway 427 Extension Corridor, this employment area has approximately 340 ha. of available land that could yield employment levels of approximately 12,000 employees. The current timeline for development is within five years.

- Highway 427 East Employment Area (Vaughan West Business Park)
    - Located south of Langstaff Road between Highway 427 Extension Corridor and Highway 27 this employment area has approximately 160 ha. of available land that could yield employment levels of approximately 6,000 employees. Sites are immediately available indicating that this development could be built out within five years.
- City of Vaughan – York Official Plan Amendment #19
    - Located north of Langstaff Road and generally south of Major Mackenzie Drive between Highway 50 and Highway 27, OPA #19, has approximately 1,000 ha of available land that could yield employment levels of 10,000 to 15,000 employees over the next fifteen years.
- Canadian Pacific Inter-modal Facility in Vaughan
    - Located south of Major Mackenzie Drive, North of Rutherford Road between Highway 50 and Huntington Road, the Canadian Pacific Vaughan Inter-modal Facility is one of the largest rail-truck terminals in Canada, processing upwards of 350,000 containers annually, which translates into approximately 450,000 annual trucking movements.

The forecast employment growth within west Vaughan over the next 15 years is anticipated to be approximately 30,000 employees. Growth of this magnitude can result in upwards of 12,000 vehicles being destined to the industrial lands in the morning peak hour requiring upwards of 10 arterial lanes in the peak direction. These lanes of traffic are in addition to what is required for the longer distance inter-regional travel.

The City of Brampton is located to the west of the existing Highway 427 corridor. Brampton is a highly urbanized area that is continuing to develop at a rapid pace with future growth extending to Mayfield Road. Much of the growth adjacent to Highway 50 is anticipated to be residential although industrial land use has been designated for lands south of Mayfield Road and west of Highway 50. In the area between Airport Road and Highway 50, south of Mayfield Road, the existing population is anticipated to increase by approximately 80,000 in the next 15 years. Growth of this magnitude can result in upwards of 6,000 inter-regional vehicle trips exiting East Brampton during the peak hour requiring upwards of 5 arterial traffic lanes in the peak direction of travel.

As noted earlier, the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility located in the vicinity of Highway 50, Major Mackenzie Drive and Rutherford Road in the City of Vaughan is one of the largest rail-truck terminals in Canada processing approximately 350,000 containers annually, or an average of approximately 1,000 containers daily. During seasonal peak activity, the number of daily (2-way) trucks accessing the Inter-modal Facility approach 1,500, the majority of which utilizes the Rutherford Road, Highway 50, Regional Road 7 and Highway 427 corridors. The CP Inter-

modal Business Plan anticipates that the growth of containers at this facility will be in the order of 5% to 7% per annum for the next 20 to 25 years. This magnitude of growth suggests that the existing 430,000 annual trucking movements could double to approximately 900,000 annual trucking movements over the next 15 years.

Population and Employment Growth

The City of Brampton and the City of Vaughan are anticipating significant population and employment growth over the next fifteen years. The population forecasts for the City of Brampton and the City of Vaughan are anticipated to increase by approximately 50% and 40% respectively, with corresponding increases in employment forecasts.

Within the City of Brampton, the population and employment for the East Brampton area are forecast to increase by approximately 80,000 and 30,000 respectively. The employment levels within the West Vaughan industrial area are forecast to increase by approximately 30,000 employees over the next fifteen years. As these areas grow, there will be increased local and inter-regional travel demand on the transportation system serving these areas requiring significant transportation infrastructure improvements to provide the network capacity to efficiently move both people and goods.

Goods Movement

The GTA and Hamilton area generates approximately one quarter of Canada's Gross Domestic product and as such, depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of goods movement within, to, from and through the area. The vast majority of local and trade-related goods movement travels by rail and truck within the GTA. Presently, the major road facilities in terms of trucking volumes are Highway 401, Highway 427, QEW, Highway 400 and Highway 403. In addition, an extensive rail freight system connects to six major Inter-modal terminals providing connections to other parts of Canada and major international crossings with the United States. A review of traffic volume flows on these major freeways in the GTA between 1992 and 2002 indicate that the traffic flows have increased by approximately 45% (4.5% growth per annum) over this time frame which has resulted in significant congestion on the freeway system during peak travel periods.

The continued development growth within the GTA will increase travel on the transportation system resulting in worsening levels of congestion on the major road system, unless major infrastructure improvements are provided. Previous studies suggest that transportation costs represent approximately 5% of the total value of goods. Increased congestion on the transportation network will threaten the efficient and effective movement of goods within the GTA and Hamilton Area and impact the cost of the total value of goods.

With respect to the east Brampton and west Vaughan areas, there is a Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) line which runs north from Toronto through Woodbridge along the western edge of Klienburg which has a spur line connecting to the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility located in the vicinity of Highway 50, Major Mackenzie Drive and Rutherford Road. Trucking access to the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility is primarily focused on Rutherford Road (Terminal Truck Access), Highway 50, Regional Road 7, and Highway 427 which are also key regional corridors for goods movement by truck.

The number of containers handled at the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility is anticipated to double over the next fifteen years. This will result in double the number of trucks accessing the terminal. CP has indicated that as the volume of trucks increases, a second truck access to the CP Inter-modal Facility onto Major Mackenzie Drive will be required.

The 50,000 daily traffic vehicles on Highway 427 from Highway 401 to Regional Road 7 increased by approximately 50% between 1992 to 2002. With truck volumes representing approximately 9% of the total volume, existing daily truck volumes are approaching 4,500. The approximate 1,500 daily trucking movements at the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility represent approximately one third of the trucks presently using Highway 427. The doubling of number of containers at the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility and the developing major employment districts in east Brampton and west Vaughan will result in significant increases of truck traffic on the Highway 427 corridor.

Existing daily traffic on the Highway 50 corridor north of Regional Road 7 has increased by almost 70% over the last decade to approximately 35,000 daily vehicles with truck traffic representing upwards of 10% of the total traffic. The 1,500 daily truck movements associated with the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility represent almost 40% of the total trucks. The forecast employment opportunities on either side of Highway 50 along with the increased operations at the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility will significantly increase truck traffic on an existing congested Highway 50 corridor.

Increased traffic growth and resulting congestion on Highway 50 without major infrastructure improvements to the transportation network would result in increased trucking activity on local roads and increased safety concerns.

As noted in the Draft Growth Plan, enabling goods movement requires an inter-modal transportation system that integrates different modes of transport to provide access to the least expensive and most effective means to move goods. Strategic improvements and expansion to the existing transportation network with improved access to the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility are key ingredients needed to build an effective goods movement network in the Highway 427, Highway 50 and Highway 27 corridors.

Land Use Policies

As noted in the previous overview section, the area immediately north of the existing Highway 427 terminus is approved to be redeveloped for industrial purposes.

The magnitude of population and employment growth in east Brampton and west Vaughan will place further stresses on the existing Regional and Provincial transportation network serving this area. Therefore, it is important to identify transportation solutions and protect required property in a timely manner to ensure that this planned development can occur.

Growing Congestion

The major arterial roadways of Highway 50, Regional Road 7 and Highway 27 currently are heavily traveled roadways that experience traffic congestion in peak periods of travel both along roadway sections and at key intersections. To address safety and network operations, several studies have been undertaken to identify infrastructure improvements associated with these corridors. It is of note that the intersection of Highway 50 and Regional Road 7 is operating at capacity due to a demand of upwards of 1,500 southbound left turns in the morning peak hour. To address the left turn operations at this intersection, alternatives inclusive of ramps and grade separated intersections have been reviewed as the existing dual left turns cannot accommodate increased travel flows.

To address transportation access issues related to these lands, the Regional Municipalities of York and Peel undertook a Class Environmental Assessment Study and received EA approval for the following roadway improvements:

- 4 lane north-south arterial road from the existing terminus of Highway 427 to Fogal Road (approximately 800 metres). This road would be constructed as a temporary road pending the potential extension of Highway 427.
- 4 lane east-west mid-block connector road north of Highway 7 (Fogal Road) between The Gore Road and Highway 427 corridor.
- 4 lane realignment of Huntington Road to the east of existing roadway intersecting at Highway 7 at a new signalized intersection.
- 2 lane east-west collector road opposite Ebenezer Road extending east of Highway 50 to Huntington Road.

In addition to the EA approved infrastructure noted above, the Boundary Area Transportation Study recently completed by both the Regional Municipalities of Peel and York identified that the following short term transportation infrastructure improvements are required:

- Widen Highway 50 between Castlemore Road and Regional Road 7 to 6 lanes;
- Widen Queen Street west of Highway 50 to 6 lanes;

- Widen Rutherford Road between Highway 50 and Highway 27 to 4 lanes; and
- Widen and realign Langstaff Road between Highway 50 and Highway 27

The forecast population and employment growth in east Brampton and west Vaughan over the next 10 to 15 years results in traffic growth in the north – south corridor, immediately north of Regional Road 7, between Highway 50 and Highway 27 of approximately 5,000 vehicles in the peak hour peak direction. The increased volume of approximately 5,000 vehicles represents a doubling of existing traffic volumes and would require an additional 5 arterial lanes or 2 freeway lanes plus arterial lanes to accommodate this traffic growth in the peak travel direction.

Given that the major north-south facilities in this corridor of Highway 50 and Highway 7 are currently congested during peak travel periods, transportation infrastructure improvements are required in order to accommodate the increased CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility activity and inter-regional trips resulting from planned development in east Brampton and west Vaughan.

Compatibility with Other Future Transportation Initiatives

As noted previously, the primary purpose of this project is to address existing and short term transportation problems related to the Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic to and from the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility, and inter-regional traffic on Highway 50, Highway 27 and York Regional Road 7.

It is recognized that there are longer term planning initiatives that may be undertaken over the next 30 years and beyond to achieve the planning vision outlined in the Draft Growth Plan. Given that this project is attempting to address the shorter-term issues, it is important that the results of this Environmental Assessment do not preclude or predetermine planning for the other future transportation initiatives.

One such future transportation initiative is the GTA West Corridor. This corridor is identified in the Draft Growth Plan to provide a strategic link between the GTA and Kitchener-Waterloo to facilitate the movement of people and goods. Although the location of this link is not known at this time (as this initiative has not been carried through the environmental assessment process), it is possible that the GTA West Corridor could be sited in the vicinity of this project. As such, it is important to ensure that this project will not predetermine or preclude the location of the GTA West corridor. It is not envisioned that the GTA West Corridor could be located south of Teston Road due to existing land use constraints south of Teston Road to the east and to the west. If an extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor is determined to be the most appropriate solution to the shorter term transportation problems, it is important that its terminus not preclude or predetermine any reasonable options for a future

GTA West Corridor or a future crossing of the Humber River.

The former GTA North Corridor between GTA and Simcoe County is not identified in the 30-year planning horizon of the Draft Growth Plan. The Draft Growth Plan places emphasis on servicing that area by optimizing Highway 400, intensification of existing urban areas and transit-supportive communities, and higher order transit. The intent of the current 427 Transportation Corridor EA is not a phased step towards a longer-term corridor. This undertaking has a specific purpose to address a distinct set of immediate, short-term problems. A key objective of the environmental assessment study will be to identify a solution that addresses the short-term transportation needs without predetermining / prejudging the location of a future extension if it is ever required.

If the technically preferred alternative is the extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor, the length of the extension, the location of the terminus and the nature of environmental features impacted will be key considerations in developing a solution that does not predetermine the location of a future extension if it is ever required. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 5 of this document.

Summary of Transportation Problems

The above information indicates significant **existing and short-term** transportation problems related to the Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic to and from the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility and inter-regional traffic on Highway 50, Highway 27 and Regional Road 7. In addition, it has identified the need to initiate the environmental assessment process to ensure that opportunities are not lost and that planned development within the existing urban boundaries of the Cities of Vaughan and Brampton can proceed.

The existing transportation network is not capable of supporting the projected growth in population, employment, and goods movement. Failure to address these transportation deficiencies could result in unacceptable travel delay that would be costly to industry and negatively affect the traveling public. The reduction in mobility and access will restrict the ability of the broader region to attract new business and promote economic growth and have significant impacts to the mobility of area residents and to the traveling public in general.

Additional verification and definition of transportation problems and opportunities will be undertaken during the Environmental Assessment Study.

2.4 Summary of the Purpose of the Undertaking

The purpose of the EA study is to:

- Address existing and short term transportation problems related to the Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic to and from the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility, and inter-regional (commuter and commercial) traffic

on Highway 50, Highway 27 and Regional Road 7;

- Identify and protect required property to allow planned development to occur; and,
- Ensure that alternatives will not preclude or predetermine planning for the other future corridors such as the GTA West corridor or a future transportation corridor in Simcoe County.

The specific need for any proposed undertaking(s) and a description of the proposed undertaking(s) will be developed during the initial phases of the EA study.

3. Overview of Environmental Conditions and Potential Effects

The proposed EA Study will utilize a study process that seeks to avoid, minimize or prevent adverse environmental effects. For the purposes of this study, the term "environment" reflects the definition in the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act, which includes natural, social, economic and cultural features. Specific mitigation measures and the approaches for management of environmental effects will be developed and addressed during the EA.

Overview of Existing Environmental Conditions

Secondary source environmental research has been undertaken during the course of preparing the EA ToR. This information has led to a basic understanding of the existing environment and major environmental features in the 427 Transportation Corridor. The following summarizes the notable environmental features in the broader area.

The area is situated within the Region of Peel and the Region of York and includes the cities of Vaughan and Brampton. Both Peel and York have Official Plans that provide the long term vision for growth and the policies for implementing future growth.

The Humber River is the most prominent natural environmental feature in the area. At the terminus of Highway 427, the river is located over 3km to the east, in the vicinity of Islington Avenue. The main branches of the Humber River curve westerly north of the Highway 427 terminus and cross due north of the Highway 427 terminus approximately 4 km north of Teston Road. There are also a number of natural watercourses flowing from northwest to southwest through this area.

Highway 427 currently terminates at York Regional Road 7 in the City of Vaughan. The lands north of the existing terminus are currently in transition. The lands between Highway 50, Highway 27 south of Major Mackenzie Drive in the City of Vaughan are planned to be redeveloped to industrial uses and various development applications are currently being withheld due to uncertainty of the limits of a future north-south transportation corridor through this area.

Highway 407 ETR is an east-west toll highway operated by a private sector consortium (Highway 407 ETR Concession Corporation) located to the south of the existing Highway 427 terminus.

There is a Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) line which runs north from Toronto through Woodbridge along the western edge of Klienburg and proceeds northerly towards Barrie. This line is CPR's main transcontinental route to western Canada and carries high freight volumes. A spur line is located along this corridor connecting this line to the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility located in the vicinity of Highway 50, Major Mackenzie Drive and Rutherford Road.

A hydro corridor is also located through this area. From the south, the hydro corridor is situated to the east of the existing Highway 427 terminus and proceeds northerly between the CP Rail line and Highway 50.

Identifying Environmental Conditions During the EA

Further environmental investigations, including secondary source reviews and field investigations will occur during the EA, once a study area has been defined.

This environmental work will be undertaken to further identify environmental conditions and to develop extensive mapping describing the environmental features in more detail. This will assist in the assessment of planning alternatives (alternatives to the undertaking) and the generation and evaluation of alternative methods. As the study progresses and the range of alternatives become more focused, more detailed environmental investigations will be undertaken.

Inputs to the Identification of Potential Environmental Effects

In generating, assessing and evaluating alternatives and selecting a preferred alternative, the main objective is to avoid, minimize or prevent adverse environmental impacts while developing a transportation solution that addresses the identified problems and opportunities.

This document outlines issues that will be considered during the generation of alternatives to minimize adverse environmental impacts and describes how impacts associated with alternatives will be assessed. **Table 5.1** of this document lists the various environmental and technical considerations that will be used to generate alternative methods. **Table 5.2** outlines a set of evaluation criteria to be used to assess impacts to each component of the environment (i.e. Natural Environment, Socio-economic Environment, Cultural Environment and Technical Requirements/Considerations) associated with the alternative methods. The evaluation criteria provide an indication of the potential environmental effects. Potential environmental effects will be further examined during the EA.

4. Description and Statement of Rationale for Alternatives

The EA will focus on the purpose and rationale for the undertaking and the identification and assessment of alternatives to the undertaking. Subsequent to the assessment and selection of a preferred alternative(s) to the undertaking, an appropriate study area will be identified, alternative methods will be generated and assessed and a preferred alternative method will be selected.

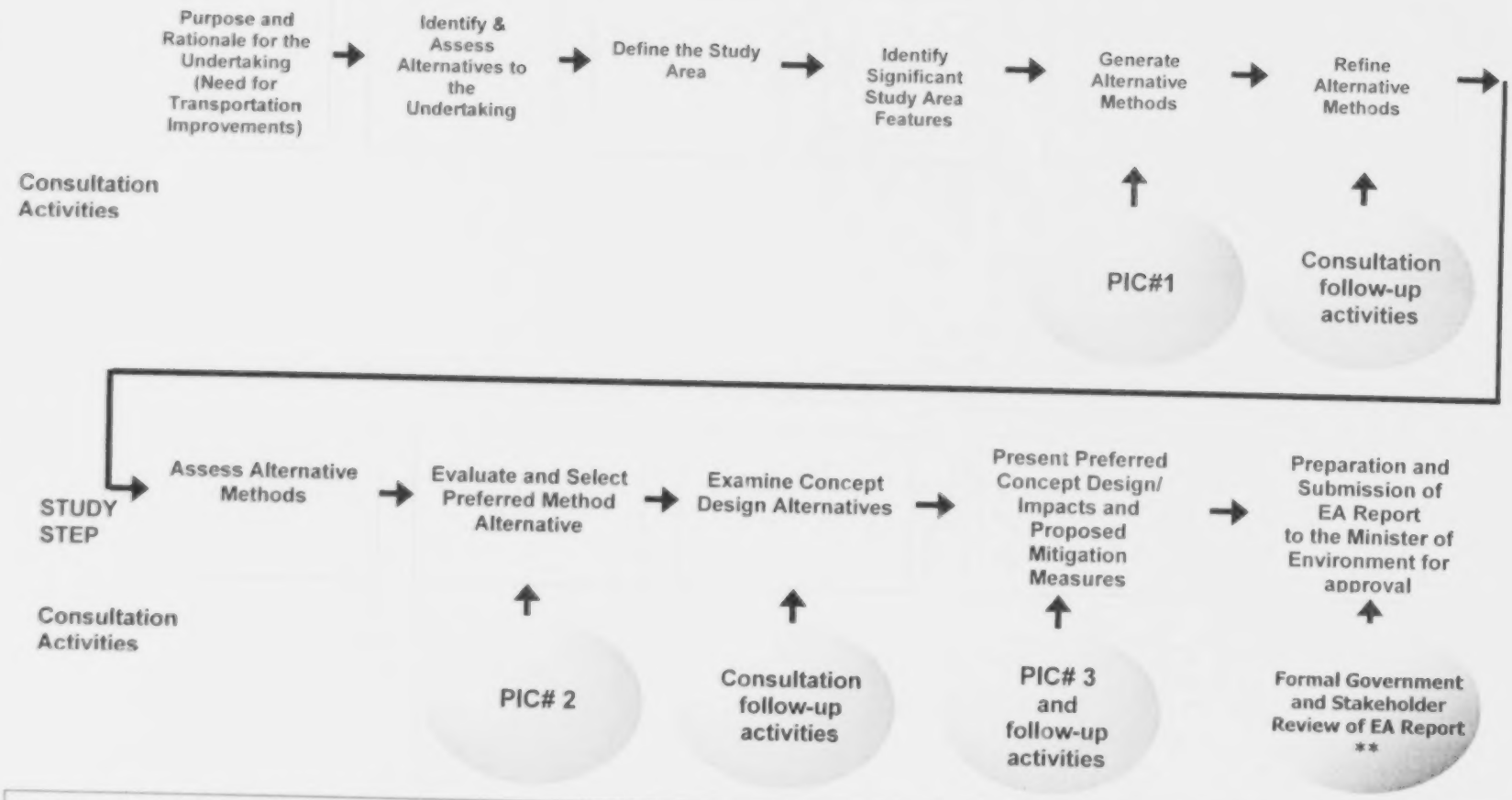
As the study progresses and the range of alternatives becomes more focused, more detailed environmental investigations will be undertaken. Impact assessment will be conducted at a more general and strategic level, based primarily on secondary source information when comparing alternatives to the undertaking and in more detail when comparing alternative methods for carrying out the undertaking. As alternative methods for the undertaking are developed, the information collected will be supplemented with field data and additional research. Once a preferred alternative method is selected, more focused data will be collected. This process of collecting additional environmental data as the project becomes more focused ensures that current information is sought and used throughout the study process.

4.1. Alternatives to the Undertaking (Transportation Planning Alternatives)

Transportation planning alternatives (i.e. alternatives to the undertaking) represent reasonable means of addressing the stated transportation problems and opportunities, as well as achieving the purpose of the undertaking. In addition to 'doing nothing', alternatives to address deficiencies in the transportation network capacity typically include those that increase network capacity, reduce transportation demand or combinations thereof.

The transportation planning alternatives to be considered in the EA will include, but are not limited to:

- **Travel Demand Management (TDM)** – TDM strategies include measures implemented to improve the operation of the current transportation system by managing travel demand independent of actually expanding or constructing new infrastructure. The emphasis of TDM strategies is to reduce overall demands on the network, shift demands to time periods outside of the critical congestion periods, and shift demands to alternative modes of transportation, principally transit, cycling and walking;


Purpose and Rationale for the Undertaking (Need for Transportation Improvements)
Identify & Assess Alternatives to the Undertaking
Define the Study Area
Identify Significant Study Area Features
Generate Alternative Methods
Refine Alternative Methods
Consultation Activities
PIC#1
Consultation follow-up activities
STUDY STEP
Assess Alternative Methods
Evaluate and Select Preferred Method Alternative
Examine Concept Design Alternatives
Present Preferred Concept Design/ Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures
Preparation and Submission of EA Report to the Minister of Environment for approval
Consultation Activities
PIC# 2
Consultation follow-up activities
PIC# 3 and follow-up activities
Formal Government and Stakeholder Review of EA Report **

Note: The above study steps and consultation activities represent a framework to guide the future EA study. The process outlined may be refined as determined appropriate during the EA to reflect study findings and input received through consultation.

** Once the EA Report has been submitted, the Ministry of the Environment will undertake a formal government and stakeholder review to assist in making a decision on whether to approve the undertaking. The government and stakeholder review period for the EA Report is seven weeks. See Section 7.8 for details of the MOE review and approval process.

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427 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
Environmental Assessment
Terms of Reference

EA Process

EXHIBIT
4.1

- **Transportation Systems Management (TSM)** – The objective of TSM is to improve the efficiency and safety of the transportation system and optimize the use of existing and planned infrastructure through a wide range of strategies and technology policies and initiatives. Measures include initiatives such as transit priority facilities, ITS (intelligent transportation system) strategies, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and Reserved Bus Lanes (RBL), Park'n'Ride facilities and intersection improvements;
- **Improved Roadways/Transitways** – The provision of improved capacity and operations on existing facilities may increase the performance of the transportation network. Congestion may be relieved through additional capacity on existing roadways/transitways;
- **New Roadways/Transitways** – Accommodating required capacity on new transportation facilities may increase the performance of the transportation network. Congestion may be relieved by introducing capacity in a new transportation corridor;
- **Combinations of the above** – In addition to the individual planning alternatives noted above, it is proposed to establish additional "combined" planning alternatives that represent creative combinations of the above methods of adding capacity or reducing trips; and
- **Do Nothing** – "Do Nothing" is considered the status quo, where the transportation system would be limited to the implementation of approved Provincial, Regional and local Municipal initiatives.

As previously noted, the above list represents a minimum number of alternatives to the undertaking that will be examined within the EA.

4.2. Assessment of Alternatives to the Undertaking

Transportation planning alternatives provide an opportunity to examine fundamentally different ways of addressing transportation problems. In recognition of these fundamental differences among the planning alternatives, it is appropriate to examine the effectiveness of each type of alternative to address the problems and take advantage of opportunities at a functional level.

The assessment of planning alternatives at a functional level will consider broad factors and criteria that reflect objectives in addressing the stated transportation problems, while considering potential impacts on the environment. **Table 4.1** identifies a listing of proposed factors and criteria to be considered.

It should be noted that **Table 4.1** represents the minimum number of considerations for identifying the advantages and disadvantages of transportation planning alternatives. This listing is subject to refinement

and modifications based on input received during the EA. As such, interested parties, agencies and stakeholders will be provided the opportunity to review and provide comments on the factors and criteria used to identify a preferred transportation planning alternative or preferred combination of alternatives to the undertaking.

Table 4.1: Proposed Factors and Criteria for Identifying and Assessing Transportation Planning Alternatives

CRITERIA
Factor: Transportation
• The ability to address congestion on the transportation network by improving travel time and reliability for passenger and freight. • Ability to optimize (e.g. TDM and TSM strategies) the use of existing transportation corridors or planned network improvements. • The degree to which the proposed system modification addresses operational problems on the transportation network in the area (i.e. from inter-regional traffic on Hwy 7 and Hwy 50 and truck traffic from the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Yard). • The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification supports, or is consistent with federal, provincial and municipal plans and policies. • The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification resolves the defined problems. • The degree to which the proposed system modification improves modal choice and creates a more balanced transportation system.
Factor: Economy
• The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification supports provincial, regional and municipal trade and economic policies. • The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification supports existing and planned future land use and growth including recognition of growth management plans and policies as articulated in provincial, regional and municipal plans and policy documents.
Factor: Environmental Feasibility
• The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification impacts environmental factor areas (Natural Environment, Socio-economic Environment and Cultural Environment). • The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification minimizes resource consumption (e.g. mineral, aggregate, agricultural land). • The degree to which the proposed transportation system modification supports federal, provincial and municipal environmental protection policies. • The potential to reduce the consequences resulting from congestion such as higher noise levels, reduced air quality etc.
Factor: Technical Feasibility
• Ability to achieve minimum technical requirements at a reasonable construction/implementation cost

4.3. Selection of the Preferred Alternative(s) to the Undertaking

The advantages and disadvantages of the various alternatives will be compared to select a preferred alternative(s). A detailed rationale for the selection of the preferred alternative(s) will be provided in the EA report. The trade-offs used to select a preferred alternative(s) will reflect:

- Government legislation, policies and guidelines;
- Municipal policy (i.e. Official Plans);
- Public, Agencies, First Nations, Consultation Groups, and other stakeholder issues and concerns; and
- Project Team expertise.

The rationale will be documented clearly and concisely in a format that can be easily understood by all stakeholders.

To determine next steps, the selected planning alternative will be placed into one of the following four categories:

1. If the Preferred Planning Alternative is "Do Nothing" – the EA process is complete and no further study will be initiated.
2. If the Preferred Planning Alternative is a transportation mode or solution that is outside the jurisdiction of MTO – the current EA process will be halted; MTO will refer the planning alternative to the appropriate agency or jurisdiction for further review and action.
3. If the Preferred Planning Alternative is entirely within the jurisdiction of MTO (MTO as the proponent) and is an undertaking that requires an Individual EA – the EA process continues and MTO will proceed to the Alternative Methods stage as outlined in this ToR document, or to the appropriate MTO Class EA process, as will be determined during the EA.
4. If the Preferred Planning Alternative is a combination of solutions that are within the jurisdiction of MTO and modes/solutions that are outside the jurisdiction of MTO – the EA process continues; MTO proceeds to the Alternative Methods stage as outlined in this ToR document or to the appropriate MTO Class EA Process. Planning alternatives that are outside MTO jurisdiction are referred to the appropriate agency for further review and action.

5. Alternative Methods

The process outlined in this chapter is applicable to transportation solutions that fall within the mandate of the Ministry of Transportation and requires an Individual Environmental Assessment. In the case of this project, an Individual Environmental Assessment would be required for an extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor.

As described in Chapter 4, should the assessment of transportation planning alternatives identify other / additional solutions, an appropriate study process would be pursued by the pertinent agency / proponent(s).

The alternative methods stage will focus on the following study steps:

- Defining the study area;
- Identifying significant study area features;
- Generating alternative methods;
- Refining alternative methods;
- Assessing alternative methods;
- Evaluating and selecting a preferred alternative method;
- Preparing the concept design of the selected preferred alternative; and
- Preparation and submission of EA Report.

The process for the generation and evaluation of alternative methods within the broader context of the EA study process is schematically illustrated in **Exhibit 4.1b**.

5.1. Process for Generating a Study Area

The study area is defined as the geographic area within which a reasonable range of alternatives will be generated. It is fundamental to note that the study area does not limit the potential to examine environmental impacts and effects outside of its boundaries.

The MTO Project Team will generate a study area through consultation with affected stakeholders. The following inputs will be used to guide the generation of study area limits:

- Identified transportation problems and opportunities;
- Significant natural, socio-economic and cultural environmental features (as identified through secondary source data and consultation);
- Current government land use planning policies and initiatives;
- Ensuring that the preferred alternative will not predetermine or preclude future transportation initiatives; and,
- Existing transportation infrastructure.

One of the key objectives of this project is to ensure that the preferred

alternative does not preclude or predetermine other future transportation initiatives. This will be a key consideration in the generation of a Study Area. Specifically, in considering how far north the study area should extend.

During the EA Study, the study area limits may be refined or modified as required to accommodate any reasonable alternatives that may be developed.

5.2. Generating and Assessing Alternative Methods

The process for the generation and evaluation of route alternatives is schematically illustrated in **Exhibit 4.1**.

The underlying principle regarding the alternatives generation process is to start with a broad perspective and narrow to the more focused as the study progresses. The starting point is a broad EA Study Area that can accommodate a reasonable range of alternatives. At this stage environmental information, based largely on secondary sources, field reviews and consultation, will be collected to identify significant environmental features.

This principle will be applied as follows:

- Upon establishing the Study Area, route alternatives will be generated, refined and examined in greater detail as the study progresses to determine potential environmental effects.
- Route alternatives will be comparatively evaluated to determine the best alternative (preferred alternative) and mitigation measures will be identified.
- The preferred alternative will be more fully developed to determine the best Concept Design in order to fully document potential effects and allow mitigation measures to be developed in greater detail.

Under this process, as alternatives are developed, study area information is supplemented with field data and additional research as required. When a preferred alternative is selected, concept design proceeds with even more focused data that will include detailed field surveys. This process continues on into preliminary design and subsequently detail design. The process of collecting additional environmental data as the project becomes more focused ensures that current information is sought and used throughout planning and design. The detail design phase requires the most exacting field survey data and detailed environmental research to fine-tune the designs and finalize mitigation measures to address environmental impacts.

This approach is based on MTO's existing policies and protocols and has been used on other EA studies in Ontario by MTO and other proponents. Details of the process to generate and evaluate alternative methods are provided in the following sections.

For this project, it is anticipated that many of the route alternatives will focus on the appropriate terminus for the extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor.

In the process of generating and assessing route alternatives, various terminus locations will be examined. Key considerations during this stage will include the impact on the future local road network, the degree to which the alternative addresses the problems, and whether the alternative predetermines or precludes other future transportation initiatives.

5.3. Process to Generate Alternative Methods

Once the EA Study Area has been determined, route alternatives will be generated. Data necessary to support the generation of alternatives will be collected primarily from secondary sources such as aerial photography and large-scale constraint mapping (i.e., Geographic Information System data) compiled from information provided by the province's Draft Growth Plan, external agencies and from Municipal Official Plans, as well as information collected during previous MTO studies. This information will be supplemented, as required, by data collected from interested groups and individuals, discussions with ministries, agencies and the public, and preliminary field reviews.

Alternative methods will be generated based on the following guiding principles:

- **Resolve transportation problems and take advantage of existing and future opportunities recognizing project need** (i.e. truck traffic accessibility to the CP Vaughan Inter-modal Facility and inter-regional traffic on Highway 50 and York Regional Road 7), which will be confirmed during the initial stages of the EA Study;
- **Minimize impacts to existing land uses areas planned for future development;**
- **Compatibility with other Transportation Initiatives** (i.e. alternatives should not preclude or predetermine other transportation corridors, such as the GTA West corridor, and a further northerly extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor, if it is ever required).
- **Utilize existing infrastructure to the extent possible** - Taking advantage of existing transportation and other linear corridors may reduce impacts to the natural, social and economic environments;
- **Minimize impacts to significant natural features, functions, systems and communities;** and
- **Minimize impacts to urban/rural areas** - Such areas generally provide a focus for cultural, recreational, social and economic activities.

If the extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor is carried forward into the Alternative Methods stage, the length of the extension / appropriate terminus and nature of environmental features crossed / impacted will be key considerations in developing a solution that does not predetermine

the location of a future extension if it is ever required. Under this scenario, it is unlikely that there would be significantly different alignment alternatives due to the existing terminus of Highway 427, the abutting land use and utility constraints (existing rail and hydro facilities).

Alignment alternatives and terminus location alternatives (which could include municipal east-west roads in the area) will be generated and evaluated to determine a preferred alternative (refer to Section 5.5. for detail on the process for evaluating alternatives).

The objectives and rationale for generating alternatives will be to ensure not only that alternatives are efficient/direct, and meet technical objectives/design requirements but also minimize/avoid impacts to significant environmental and study area features to the extent possible. **Table 5.1** outlines the environmental and technical considerations that will be considered to address the objective to minimize/avoid impacts to the extent possible. It should be noted that these represent the minimum environmental considerations concerning generating alternatives and are subject to refinement and modification during the EA based on study findings and input received from stakeholders.

The alternatives will then be reviewed with agencies and the public through the consultation process. This consultation phase is critical to developing a reasonable set of alternative methods. Local residents can add valuable information to the database gathered by the Project Team. Refinements to the alternatives will be integrated where warranted and a final set of alternatives methods will be brought forward to the evaluation process.

The preferred alternatives will be identified through the evaluation process described in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Environmental and Technical Considerations During the Generation of Alternatives

COMPONENT	Features / Considerations
Natural Environment	• Groundwater Quality and Quantity • Surface Water Quality and Quantity • Agricultural Soils • Wetlands • Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI's) • Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA's) • Woodlands / Vegetation • Wildlife Preserves • Species at Risk / Endangered Species
Cultural Environment	• Historical, Archaeological and Cultural Sites • Provincial Parks, and Conservation/ Recreational Areas
Social Environment	• Landfills and Hazardous Waste Sites • Areas of Residential / Commercial / Institutional Development • Agricultural Operations

COMPONENT	Features / Considerations
Technical	• Adherence to Applicable Design Standards • Efficiency • Compatibility with and benefits to the overall Transportation Network

Specific objectives for each of the above components / considerations will be developed during the EA and presented to stakeholders for review and comment.

5.4. Refinement of Alternative Methods

It is anticipated that during consultation events, comments and suggestions will be provided regarding modifying / refining alternative methods. The process for assessing the refinements suggested during these consultation events will be based on the factor specific environmental inputs.

The objectives and rationale employed for generating alternatives will form the basis for determining whether suggested refinements should be carried forward. Refinements will be examined based on consideration of the natural, socio-economic, cultural environments and technical generation criteria.

5.5. Evaluation of Alternative Methods

After the various alternative methods are generated and refined based on consultation, the evaluation of the alternatives will commence.

The evaluation of alternative methods is a two-step process. The first step (assessment) entails the identification of advantages and disadvantages of the various alternatives under consideration. At this stage, each environmental feature is examined to determine the extent of impact. Net impacts will be identified; these refer to the effects on the environment that remain after standard mitigation measures have been applied to reduce the extent of the impact.

The second stage is the evaluation itself. This stage builds upon the information obtained from the impact assessment stage and involves a comparative analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives considered to select a preferred alternative. At this stage, the relative importance of the environmental features is determined. A "Do Nothing" scenario will be carried forward to represent a base case for comparison to the preferred alternative.

If the extension of the 427 Transportation Corridor is carried forward into the Alternative Methods stage, the appropriate terminus for the extension would be a key element in the evaluation of alternatives. In comparing these alternatives, the impact on the future local road network, the degree to which the alternative addresses the problems, and whether the

alternative predetermines or precludes other future transportation initiatives are expected to be the key factors that inform decision making.

It is expected that alternatives would be generated and assessed for each of the various terminus locations. The preferred alignment for each terminus point would be identified and each terminus point would be examined and compared to select a preferred alternative. Once a preferred alternative is selected, additional investigations will be undertaken to refine the preferred alternative (i.e. specific alignment and interchange configuration details). The Concept Design stage will focus on determining the design details of the selected preferred alternative.

Evaluation Method

The evaluation of alternatives is an integral component of the EA. A sound evaluation process is based on five key principles:

- The evaluation of alternatives must be **comprehensive**;
- The process must be **understandable**;
- The results must be **replicable**;
- The data must be **traceable**; and
- The entire activity must be **participatory**, with broad input from the public, stakeholders, regulatory agencies, municipalities, etc.

The Ontario Ministry of Environment recommends that the evaluation approach should be clearly described and government ministries, municipalities, agencies, First Nations and the public should be asked for their comments early in the EA study. The method(s) used to predict net environmental effects and evaluate advantages and disadvantages should clearly identify the relative differences and key impact trade-offs.

MTO is proposing two complementary evaluation approaches to assist in the selection of a preferred alternative for this undertaking. A Reasoned Argument (or Trade-off) method will be the primary tool used to identify a preferred alternative. An Arithmetic (weighting-scoring) method will be the secondary tool and will be used to verify the results of the trade-off method.

The Reasoned Argument (trade-off) evaluation component will provide a clear presentation to stakeholders of the key trade-offs between the various evaluation factors and the reasons why one alternative is preferred over another. The Arithmetic evaluation provides a means to compare the alternative methods based on a numerical scaling with weights assigned by MTO and other stakeholders as determined through the EA Study consultation. A numerical approach is a good sensitivity analysis tool to determine if the conclusions of the reasoned argument approach are valid and appropriate. During the EA study, the decision making process will be clearly documented to support a traceable process and to ensure that it is understandable to those who may be affected by the decisions. Details on the Reasoned Argument (trade-off) and Arithmetic evaluation methods are outlined as follows:

Reasoned Argument (Trade-off) Method

This method will be the primary evaluation method employed to select a preferred alternative. This method highlights the differences in net effects associated with the various alternatives. Based on these differences, the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative are identified. The relative significance of the impacts are examined to provide a clear rationale for the selection of a preferred alternative. The rationale that favours the selection of one alternative over all others will be derived from the following sources:

- Government legislation, policies and guidelines;
- Municipal policy (i.e., Official Plans);
- Issues and concerns identified during consultation with ministries and agencies, municipalities, ratepayer and interest groups and the general public (including input obtained through the weighting of the relative level of importance of evaluation criteria); and,
- Project Team expertise.

Arithmetic Evaluation Component

The Arithmetic Evaluation component will be the secondary method of evaluation and will incorporate both the level of importance of each environmental attribute (referred to as the weight) and the magnitude of the impact (or benefit) associated with an alternative (referred to as the score). Numerical values are derived for both the level of importance (weight), and the magnitude of the impact (score) associated with each alternative.

The weight is multiplied by the score to obtain a total for each factor. The totals for each alternative are compared to determine the preferred alternative method. This evaluation method also allows for sensitivity testing as numerous weighting scenarios can be developed.

- ***Scoring*** *(degree of impact):* The score assigned to each environmental attribute is relative to the impact generated. Relative impacts can range from those that are positive (benefit the environment) to negative (detrimental to the environment). The assessment of impacts will be derived from field measurements, results of prediction models, secondary data sources (as appropriate) and other means as necessary.
- ***Weighting*** *(level of importance):* Generally, more weight is assigned to those features which are felt to be more important in assessing impacts generated by alternatives, and less weight is given to those features which are considered to be less important.

Weighting scenarios can be developed in consultation with the public, regulatory agencies, First Nations and municipalities. In addition, sensitivity tests can be run to reflect input received from stakeholders and the public. Such input will provide the Project Team with an understanding of community values with respect to the relative

importance of each environmental feature.

The results of the weighting scenarios will be reviewed and compared to the results of the Reasoned Argument component.

Implementation of Evaluation Approaches

As previously noted, the Reasoned Argument method will be the primary evaluation tool used to select a preferred alternative with the Arithmetic Evaluation method used to substantiate the findings. The two evaluation approaches will be implemented concurrently. For example, the Project Team's assumptions and rationale behind its assessment of the level of importance of environmental attributes will be documented along with the corresponding arithmetic value assigned to the impact. In addition, input from stakeholders and the public will be co-ordinated through public information centres and other public consultation activities to ensure that issues, concerns and the magnitude of potential impacts are properly identified and understood by the Project Team.

The results of the two approaches will be compared and the differences identified. The results of the Arithmetic Evaluation will be re-analyzed to determine the key weight-score combinations in the Arithmetic Evaluation. Similarly, the rationale for each trade-off decision will be revisited to determine if the Project Team's decision was appropriate. If the rationale supporting the trade-off decisions is valid and appropriate, the preferred alternative method identified by the Reasoned Argument method will stand. However, if the results of the Arithmetic Evaluation lead to modifications to the trade-off decisions' rationale, the preferred alternative method resulting from the Reasoned Argument approach may be revised. The decision making process will be clearly documented and presented for stakeholders to comment on. During the EA, additional evaluation methodologies may be utilized to ensure that the nature and magnitude of potential impacts (of significant community and/or environmental value) are accurately identified and mitigated.

Data necessary to support the evaluation of alternative methods will be collected from secondary sources, prediction models and site-specific field investigations. Some of the existing information sources are identified in the supporting documentation and will be expanded upon initiation of the EA and in consultation with the stakeholders. The precise nature and scope of field investigations will be determined during the EA. This information will be supplemented based on input received from interested stakeholder groups, municipalities, regulatory agencies and the general public.

5.5.1. Factor Specific Environmental Inputs to the Evaluation of Alternatives

The data collected on the study area will assist in identifying the types of impacts each design alternative will result in, on each component of the environment. Environmental components include:

- Natural Environment;
- Socio-economic Environment; and
- Cultural Environment.

In addition, technical requirements/considerations and costs will be considered in the evaluation of alternative methods.

Each of these components will be defined by a set of evaluation criteria, which group the environmental aspects considered in the analysis of impacts for this project. Impacts will be quantified according to the list of criteria shown in **Table 5.2.** The evaluation criteria listed represent the minimum requirements in the process of evaluating route alternatives. A description of the rationale and data source associated with the evaluation criteria/indicators is outlined in **Supporting Document B**. The evaluation factors/criteria are subject to refinement and modification during the EA based on study findings, provincial policy and input received from stakeholders.

5.6. Concept Design

A concept design will be prepared for the preferred alternative method. Concept Design will be used to refine the specific alignment and develop configuration details for interchange / transitway stations and associated facilities. During the concept design, the environment and effects on the environment that will be caused or might reasonably be expected to be caused will be identified. In addition, approval requirements, mitigation or compensation measures and enhancement opportunities will be addressed with agencies and other stakeholders. The process for generating, assessing and selecting the preferred concept design alternative will be developed during the EA.

5.7. EA Report Preparation and Submission

An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report will be prepared at the conclusion of the EA to document all phases of the study. At a minimum, the EA Report will document the purpose and rationale (need) for the undertaking, alternatives considered (alternatives to the undertaking and alternative methods), consultation undertaken, the recommended plan, environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures associated with the recommended plan, commitments to compliance monitoring, and future commitments to be satisfied at subsequent design stages.

A draft Environmental Assessment Report will be made available for stakeholder review prior to formal submission to the Ministry of the Environment. The documentation will be available at government offices, public libraries and on the project web site.

Subsequent to the pre-submission review and consideration of any comments received, the EA Report will be formally submitted to the Minister of the Environment (MOE) for approval. After submission, MOE will undertake a formal public and agency review process for the EA

Report. MOE will consider all comments when making a decision whether to approve, conditionally approve or not to approve the EA Report.

In addition to the EA Report, various working and technical papers will be prepared at appropriate stages of the EA to document technical work that is undertaken to support the decision making process.

Activities following the approval of the EA Report and other approvals required are described in **Supporting Document C**.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR	CRITERIA
Socio-Economic Environment	
Property and Access	• Impacts to residential areas (i.e. property, access impacts) • Impacts to commercial/industrial areas (i.e. property, access impacts) • Impacts to agricultural areas and operations (type of crops and operations affected, agricultural transportation routes affected etc.)
Community Effects	• Nuisance Impacts (e.g. noise, lighting) • Impacts to cemeteries, schools, places of worship, unique community features • Effects on community activity / mobility • Effects on aesthetics / community character
Governmental Land Use Strategies	• Compatibility with government goals / objectives / policies • Effects on approved private development proposals
Cultural Environment	
Archaeology	• Impacts to historic/archaeological sites
Heritage and Recreation	• Impacts to built heritage features and cultural landscape units • Impacts to Provincial and local parks/recreation sites
Natural Environment	
Groundwater	• Impacts to groundwater recharge and discharge areas, identified wellhead and source protection areas, municipal and private water supply wells and areas susceptible to groundwater contamination
Aquatic Habitat, Fisheries and Surface Water	• Impacts to critical fish habitat features (spawning, rearing, nursery, important feeding areas) • Number of watercourse crossings required (permanent and ephemeral) • Implications on habitat rehabilitation programs or long-term management goals • Impacts to water bodies, including channel realignments, fill and encroachment into riparian zones
Wetlands	• Impacts to Provincially Significant Wetlands and wetland function • Impacts to evaluated and unevaluated wetlands
Wildlife	• Impacts on species at risk / endangered species (vegetation, fish and wildlife) • Effects on ecologically functional areas such as connective corridors or travel ways

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR	CRITERIA
Natural Environment Cont'd	
Special Areas	• Impacts to important wildlife areas such as deeryards, heronries, waterfowl areas, important bird areas. Other areas to be considered are any identified wildlife management, rehabilitation and research program sites • Impacts to environmentally significant features such as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs) or other areas of provincial, regional or local significance and the functions of these features
Air Quality	• Effects on sensitive receptors to air quality • Air pollutants and GHG emissions
Woodlands / Vegetation	• Impacts to significant forest stands and woodlots (including interior forest habitat) • Impacts to significant flora communities • Impacts on forest management programs
Agricultural Soils	• Impacts to prime agricultural soils (i.e. Class 1-3 soils)
Petroleum, Mineral and Mineral Aggregate Resources	• Impacts to mineral, petroleum and mineral aggregate resources
Property Waste & Contamination	• Effect on operating and closed waste disposal sites • Impacts to other known contaminated sites
Technical Considerations	
Transportation	• Transportation operations • Network compatibility/connectivity • Transportation system performance • Emergency access • Flexibility for future expansion / precluding or prejudging future expansion
Engineering	• Constructability issues • Compliance with appropriate design criteria
Cost	• Cost

Note: This table represents the minimum criteria to be considered during the evaluation of alternatives and are subject to refinement and modification during EA based on study findings and input received from stakeholders.

6. Monitoring Strategy

During the EA, MTO will commit to developing a monitoring program for the implementation of the selected preferred alternative. The EA Report will include a comprehensive list of all commitments made during the study to guide future environmental work and consultation as well as effects and compliance monitoring.

6.1 Project Technical Monitoring

During the study, a monitoring strategy will be developed to reflect how MTO proposes to ensure that the implementation of proposed mitigating measures and key design features are consistent with project commitments outlined in the EA Report and any subsequent environmental study documentation.

An environmental effects and compliance monitoring program is necessary to identify potential non-conformance with environmental design, and environmental protection requirements (as identified during the EA) and to initiate corrective action to bring the work into compliance with environmental requirements committed to in the EA Report and any subsequent environmental documentation for this undertaking.

MTO will ensure that appropriate commitments to compliance monitoring are reflected in study documentation.

The duration of the monitoring and follow-up programs will vary and will depend on the conditions of permits and approvals granted by regulatory agencies.

6.2 EA Process Monitoring

During the planning and design processes, the proponent will ensure compliance with EA process commitments prior to project implementation. If the preferred alternative includes a construction phase, the proponent will ensure that external notification and consultations are consistent with any commitments that may have been made earlier in the EA Report or other environmental documentation. Following construction, monitoring will ensure that any follow-up information is provided to external agencies as per any outstanding environmental commitments.

7 Consultation

Consultation is an integral component of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. Consultation provides opportunities for two-way communication with interested stakeholders. Consultation activities also enable the identification of potentially significant environmental issues early in the decision making process and ensure that they are given appropriate consideration. The purpose of the consultation program is to provide input to assist MTO in making decisions throughout the EA process.

The consultation program for the EA is based on the following principles:

- All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that potentially affected or interested parties are given the opportunity to participate in the consultation process;
- Stakeholders may provide input at any time during the study; however, structured opportunities for input will occur at key study stages;
- MTO will constructively address input received during the consultation process;
- MTO will make reasonable efforts to resolve concerns; and
- Consultation plans and process will be sufficiently flexible to permit responses to new issues that may arise as the study proceeds.

Various forms of consultation will take place throughout the different study steps. Consultation activities may not necessarily be limited to that described in this section. The Project Team may consider additional enhancements to the EA consultation plan if deemed to be of value to the Study.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the proposed plan for stakeholder consultation during the EA. Stakeholders can be defined as any individual or group who has an interest in the study, who could be affected by the study or who can provide pertinent information regarding the study. Generally stakeholders include public/interest groups, regulatory agencies, First Nations and area municipalities.

7.1 Overall Process for Stakeholder Consultation During the EA

Consultation with affected parties is an essential part of the EA process and provides a mechanism for the proponent to define and respond to issues.

Consultation activities during the EA are expected to be structured around obtaining input on the following three study steps:

a. Purpose and Rationale for the Undertaking / Alternatives to the Undertaking / Definition of the Study Area, Generation of Alternative Methods

At the first consultation phase, stakeholders will be asked to comment on transportation needs, the assessment and selection of the

preferred planning alternative(s) (alternatives to the undertaking), the study area, the generation of alternative methods and the criteria to evaluate and select a preferred alternative.

b. Assessment / Evaluation of Alternative Methods and Selection of a Preferred Alternative

At the second consultation phase, stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the evaluation and the rationale for the selection of the preferred alternative and provide suggestion for refinements that should be considered during Concept Design.

c. Concept Design and Mitigation of the Preferred Alternative

The third consultation phase will focus on Concept Design details and refinements and address specific impacts of the preferred alternative that will require mitigation during design, construction and post-construction. Participants in the EA will be asked to comment on the evaluation and the rationale for the selection of the preferred Concept Design alternative.

7.2 Public Consultation During the EA

The public has a major role and responsibility in determining the success of a public consultation program. The extent to which the public participates, the issues they raise and how such issues are resolved all influence the effectiveness of the consultation process.

The consultation plan will be designed such that the public will be provided reasonable timeframes for reviewing and providing comments on documentation and information made available during the EA. The proposed consultation plan encourages proactive communication, which will allow comments and views of the public to assist MTO in the decision making process.

Public Notification

The first component of the Public Consultation Plan will be to develop contact lists which will include interested individuals, ratepayer groups, recreational groups, agricultural groups, etc. located in the analysis / study area. The mailing list developed during the EA ToR will be the starting point for this stakeholder list. These stakeholders will be notified by letter/email of project activities including study start-up, Public Information Centres, and follow-up activities (as appropriate). In addition, MTO will publish newspaper advertisements for study commencement, each round of PICs and the formal Environmental Assessment Report submission in the following newspapers:

- Toronto Star
- Brampton Guardian
- Vaughan Citizen
- Other as appropriate

The above list of publications will be modified as required during the EA.

Public Information Centres and Follow-up Activities

During the EA, it is proposed that three rounds of Public Information Centres (PICs) will be held to coincide with the study steps depicted on **Exhibit 4.1**. The first round of PICs will present transportation needs, the assessment and selection of the preferred planning alternative(s) (alternatives to the undertaking), the study area, the generation of alternative methods and the criteria to evaluate and select a preferred alternative. The second round of PICs will take place after alternative methods have been refined and assessed, leading to a preferred alternative. The final round will present the preferred concept design/impacts and proposed mitigation measures prior to submission of the EA report.

These PICs will be supplemented by follow-up activities where appropriate. Each round of PICs will include individual events held throughout the identified study area. The precise locations/venues of each PIC will be determined during the EA based on the project study area, project needs/issues, input from municipalities and the availability of venues.

The PICs will be arranged as drop-in centres (open house format) to allow the public to see results, exchange information, and ask one-on-one questions of the Project Team. The PICs serve an important function in providing for two-way communications on specific local conditions, issues and concerns regarding the study.

Follow-up consultation activities will be held as necessary throughout the project. It is expected that these activities will be helpful in facilitating additional dialogue and in resolving any outstanding concerns and issues during the EA process. Follow-up activities will be arranged to address specific project issues and concerns as they arise. The format of these activities will be flexible to reflect the type of Project Team - stakeholder interaction required to address a particular issue but could include stakeholder group meetings, workshops, kitchen table meetings, presentations, surveys, and other.

Project Web Site

A website will be developed and maintained throughout the course of the EA. The website will host pertinent and up-to-date information regarding the project such as: notices of study commencement, notices of public events, project documents for information/review and the project process/schedule. The website will also include a "contact us" feature to accommodate easy communication with members of the project team and facilitate feedback from interested parties.

7.3 Regulatory Agency Consultation During the EA

Government agencies provide valuable input related to compliance issues (laws, regulations, policies and programs) and other areas of concern within their jurisdiction. These groups can offer valuable input and professional expertise and are often knowledgeable regarding local issues and can assist in the identification of local interest groups that should be consulted.

A Regulatory Agency Advisory Group will be assembled which includes potentially affected provincial ministries, agencies and federal departments. Notification letters distributed early in the EA study will solicit participation in the advisory group. Ministries and agencies will be kept apprised of project activities through scheduled meetings and be sent notices regarding all consultation activities.

Consultation with provincial ministries and agencies will involve reviewing, commenting and providing input to the environmental assessment studies, the technical analysis and the ongoing comment/input to the consultation process. Provincial ministries and agencies will be given an adequate opportunity to provide comments on project documentation at the following key milestones: i) Identify Preferred Alternative(s) to the Undertaking/Identify Alternative Methods, ii) Select Preferred Alternative Method iii) Concept Design of the Preferred Alternative and iv) draft EA Report. Liaison with representatives of provincial ministries and agencies will be arranged to obtain information on study area features, exchange pertinent study information and obtain input on project issues pertaining to each agency's mandate.

Regulatory Agency Advisory Group Meetings will be held to coincide with key study stages/milestones. Additional meetings will be held with individual agencies during the EA as required.

Involvement with federal agencies in this project is required to identify issues of federal jurisdiction, effectively address *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) requirements during the EA process and coordinate provincial and federal approvals.

Further detail regarding Federal/Provincial EA coordination is outlined in Section 1.3 and in **Supporting Document A**.

7.4 Consulting with Other Transportation Service Providers

As detailed in Chapter 4 of this ToR, the EA study will include a determination of the need for transportation improvements, and an assessment and evaluation of transportation planning alternatives ("alternatives to"). It is recognized that this initial phase of the EA study will require consultation with the appropriate transportation service

providers (e.g. GO Transit, CP Rail) that may offer information and insights regarding the need for and issues related to transportation improvements.

7.5 Engaging First Nations During the EA

An initial review of the area indicates that there are no First Nation lands in the area to be examined during the EA study. However, MTO will contact the appropriate First Nation groups in order to identify any First Nation issues that may be associated with this project and the need for / extent of participation in the EA.

MTO will be proactive in obtaining information related to First Nations interests in the study area. MTO will also consult with First Nations at key study milestones as determined appropriate during the EA.

Issues to be discussed with First Nations include but are not limited to the following:

- Identification of lands with First Nations interest within the study area
- Effects on any lands used for traditional hunting or fishing within the study area
- Impacts to areas used for the harvesting of country foods within the study area
- Impacts to locations of medicinal plants within the study area

7.6 Municipal Consultation During the EA

Based on the geographic context of the transportation deficiencies identified to date, Regional Municipality of Peel, Regional Municipality of York, and the cities of Brampton and Vaughan will be key players in the formal consultation process. In addition, the Town of Caledon and Township of King will be included in the formal municipal consultation process.

Affected municipalities will be consulted through all phases of the EA to obtain information on study area features, exchange study information and obtain input on project issues pertaining to each municipality. In addition, municipalities will be consulted to determine the appropriate method and timing for study team involvement with regional and local councils.

Municipalities

Focused municipal consultation will be required to address specific technical and local issues. It is expected that the representatives on the Municipal Advisory Group (MAG) established for the EA Terms of Reference will continue their role during the EA study. Operating procedures and membership of this group will be re-examined at the start-up of the EA.

During the EA, consultation with municipalities will involve reviewing, commenting and providing input to the environmental assessment documentation while providing ongoing comment/input to the consultation process. Municipal staff will be given adequate opportunity to provide comments on project documentation at the following key milestones: i) Identify Preferred Alternative(s)To the Undertaking/ Identify Alternative Methods, ii) Select Preferred Alternative Method, iii) Concept Design of the Preferred Alternative and iv) draft EA Report.

Municipalities will be kept apprised of project activities and be sent notices regarding all public consultation activities. It is expected that Municipal Advisory Group Meetings will be held to coincide with the key study stages shown on **Exhibit 4.1**.

Meetings will provide the opportunity for effective two-way communication between the Project Team and local/regional municipalities to identify issues and gain a better understanding of environmental conditions, gain input on the process and criteria (including their relative level of significance) to be used in the evaluation of alternatives and gain input on potential impacts associated with the preferred alternative.

MTO will make presentations to municipal Councils, as required, at key decision-making points during the EA. Council endorsement will be sought for the preferred alternative prior to the second round of Public Information Centres. Input from municipal staff will be sought as to the appropriate methods for consultation with their respective councils.

7.7 Preparation of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report

As necessary, on going discussions with all stakeholders will be conducted during the preparation of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report, to confirm input received during the study.

7.8 Environmental Assessment Review Process

MTO will consider all comments received through the study process in preparing the formal environmental assessment documentation (EA Report) for submission to the Minister of the Environment. A notice of Submission will be prepared and distributed when the EA Report is formally submitted.

Once the EA Report has been submitted, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) will undertake a formal government and stakeholder review to assist in making a decision on whether to approve the undertaking. The government and stakeholder review period is seven weeks.

Based on the input received, MOE will prepare an EA Review and issue a Notice of Completion on the EA Review within a period of 5 weeks.

Members of the public and government reviewers will have a five-week period to review and provide comments to MOE on their EA Review. Subsequent to this five-week comment period, MOE will evaluate the submissions on the EA Review and make an approval decision on the environmental assessment within a period of thirteen weeks.